

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, I was regrettably absent from the Chamber today during rollcall votes 2, 3, 4, and 5. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall 2, "yea" on rollcall 3, "yea" on rollcall 4, and "yea" on rollcall 5.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, January 21, I was unavoidably detained in my congressional district and was unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner:

On H. Res. 492, Honoring the contributions of Catholic schools, I would have voted "yea"; on H. Res. 491, Honoring Individuals Who are Mentors and Supporting Efforts to Recruit More Mentors, I would have voted "yea"; on H. Res. 490, Recognizing and Commending the Achievements of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, I would have voted "yea"; and on H. Res. 489, Stating the Agreement of the House of Representatives with the Sentiment Expressed by the Senate in Senate Resolution 281, I would have voted "yea."

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, January 20, I was unable to be present for rollcall vote No. 1, the House Quorum Call. Had I been present, I would have voted "present" for rollcall vote No. 1.

Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, January 21, I was unable to be present for rollcall vote No. 2, Honoring Catholic schools, rollcall vote No. 3, Benefits of mentoring, rollcall vote No. 4, Recognizing NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab and Mars Rover Mission, and rollcall vote No. 5, Expressing sorrow and respect for former Senator Paul Simon. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" for rollcall votes No. 2-5.

## RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES, SELECT COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS

THE SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON) laid before the House the following resignation as a member of the Committee on Financial Services, the Select Committee on Homeland Security, and the Committee on Small Business:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, January 20, 2004.

Hon. DENNIS HASTERT,  
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Effective January 20, 2004, I hereby resign from the Committee on Financial Services, the Select Committee on Homeland Security, and the Committee on Small Business due to my pending appointment to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Sincerely,

CHARLES A. GONZALEZ,  
Member of Congress.

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted.

There was no objection.

## ELECTION OF MEMBER TO COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Democratic Caucus, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 495) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 495

*Resolved*, That the following named Member be and is hereby elected to the following standing committee of the House of Representatives:

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE: Mr. Gonzalez.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## EXPRESSING CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW RANKING MINORITY MEMBER ON COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE

(Mr. MENENDEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate, on behalf of all the members of the Democratic Caucus, our colleague, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON), whom the Democratic Caucus elected as the new ranking member on the Committee on Science. He is a proven leader on the Committee on Science and within this body, and I know that he will serve our Nation well in his new capacity.

## LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. LEWIS of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I wish to address the House for the purpose of inquiring of the majority leader the schedule for next week.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, the House will convene on Tuesday at 12:30 p.m. for morning hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. We will consider several measures under suspension of the rules, and a final list of those bills will be sent to Members' offices by the end of this week. Any votes called on these measures will be rolled until 6:30 p.m.

On Wednesday, the House will convene at 10 a.m. for legislative business. We plan to consider S. 1920, which extends Chapter 12 of the Federal Bankruptcy Code until July 1, 2004. In addition, we hope to consider S. 610, which

would provide some important management reforms at NASA.

Finally, it is my understanding that our colleagues in the Senate are likely to pass the omnibus appropriations bill, possibly as early as tomorrow. However, I would like to make all Members aware that if the Senate does not act, we may be forced to move a long-term continuing resolution next week, as the present continuing resolution we are operating on expires at the end of next week.

I thank the gentleman for yielding and would be happy to answer any questions he may have.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the leader for that information.

Mr. Majority Leader, when the Congress adjourned for the year last year, it failed to extend the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Program, leaving 90,000 American workers and their families every week, roughly one-half million workers by the end of this month, in the lurch. We have 200 Democrats who have signed a discharge petition that would bring to the floor legislation to extend this much-needed help to those workers.

Can the majority leader tell the House, tell all of us when he will schedule debate on this important matter?

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. I continue to yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's yielding to me.

As the gentleman knows, he was here last night, the President mentioned last night that the third-quarter economic growth in 2003 was the strongest in 20 years and that housing starts and home ownership rates are up and at an all-time high; that financial markets are growing, after a long contraction; that interest rates are low; that factory orders are up; that unemployment is on the decline. Unemployment benefit claims have decreased actually every month since September, and the unemployment rate today is 5.7 percent, which is almost a full percentage point lower than the rate that we had in 1994 when a Democrat Congress and a Democrat President discontinued an expanded unemployment compensation program.

So with a growing economy and a recent precedent for managing these scenarios, it is clear to the majority that the best employment program is to keep growing jobs and paychecks instead of extending and expanding Federal programs.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, is the majority leader telling us there is not a need to bring this legislation to the floor of the House for a vote when more than 200 Democratic Members have signed a discharge petition?

Mr. DELAY. The last time I checked, Mr. Speaker, 218 is a majority.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.